

# Historical Series

# EAST ARDSLEY CRICKET CLUB

During the 1870's there was a tremendous development in the formation of cricket clubs locally and the men of East Ardsley not to be outdone called a meeting on the 30th July 1878 at the Black Swan, East Ardsley. They decided to pay a half crown and three half pence a week thereafter in order to form a cricket team. The first match was played on the Black Swan ground on Sept. 9th 1878 which was (Ardsley Feast) against Adwalton Queen Elizabeth. The team won their first match against Lee Fair on July 26th 1879.

## NEW MOVE

After a period of four years on the Black Swan Ground which didn't prove very satisfactory, they decided to move to their present ground, where a properly planned level was laid 30yds x 12yds at a cost of £3-10-0. When the square was play fit they elected a captain J.E. Whiteley, formerly they filled the Captains position by a weekly election.

It was decided to name the team East Ardsley United Cricket Club by the members - who elected Rev. J.H. Dent - Hill pres - Dr. G.W. Young vice pres. The first secretary was Mr. W. Winterbourn the local headmaster and the treasurer was G. Durham, with such a distinguished body of officials the club was bound to succeed. For the next seven years they persevered and by 1889 they had become a powerful side in the Wakefield and District League and in that year won the cup under the captaincy of Sam Scott. David Bedford skipped the winning side in 1890. This was a remarkable victory after losing 8 wks for 19. J. Wood and J. Salt took the score to 59 and proceeded to bowl Thornhill out for 37.

## SUCCESSFUL SEASONS

The side lost in the 1891 cup final but were successful under the leadership of Tom Auty in 1892. The season of 1900 saw a fine Ardsley "medico". Dr. Basil G. Ewing lead the Jeffery Field side to another Cup success.

During the 1909 season under the leadership of D. Watson they made a record score in the final of 300 against Lofthouse who disputed their defeat suggesting bad light. The same two sides contested the final in 1911. East Ardsley made a new record score of 337 the captain being (M. Bedford) to maintain their superiority over their greatest rivals, they bowled Lofthouse

out for a mere 80 runs.

East Ardsley won the Gildersome and District League in 1897-1912.

## PLAYERS OF MERIT

D. Watson won the league medal for batting in 1897 and the following year J. Stoppard headed the league averages. For the next 20 years a number of fine players assisted the club mostly natives of the village, W. Bedford, Scott Russell, J.E. Pearson, E. Hartley, Alf Hepworth (who in 1916 won the Bradford League averages with 62.8 - Jack Hobbs being second and Frank Woolley third) Hepworth brought much cricketing fame to Ardsley and was probably one of the finest club cricketers of all time. In 1920 the club became members of the Yorkshire Council and engaged as professionals Ben Parrish and Alf Black from (Gt. Horton) and Alf Welburn (Bradford). Tommy Turtrey of course was the finest wicketkeeper to play for the club and as a groundsman for over 30 years he was unsurpassed, one could rightly say he knew every blade of grass growing on "Jeffrey Field". Turtrey's playing career extended more than 38 years and though he was invited to turn professional he remained loyal to his village side, possibly the last of the men of cricketing faith.

## OFFICIALS

Dr. Basil G. Ewing was president for over 30 years Harold Bedford first treasurer then secretary over 20 years. Ald. John Dews treasurer for a number of years, Sydney Broadhead who had a committee membership of over 40 years and was president over 12 years, his son W.B. Broadhead was a very fine batsman and played for the country in 1929. Ernest Bates J.P. Walter Fisk, Jim Farrington, H. Falkinder, Len Saville and H. G. Saville and at a later stage John Speak was an effective treasurer.

## CRICKET NURSARY

From 1925 to 1949 when (East Ardsley were awarded the Second Division Championship owing to Liversedge refusing to a play-off on September 17th) the club had produced a number of fine young cricketers, Eric Fisk, R. Harris, R. Pearson, Peter Rix, Gerry Farrar, Geoff Woollin to name a few, most of these received invitations to the nets at Headingley and Eric Fisk played for the Yorks 2 for a number of occasions. Jim Audsley a well known figure in the Ardsley business world was

secretary in 1948 having succeeded Harold Bedford, but in 1949 Leonard Saville took over. During the next 6 years a number of good young cricketers were attracted to assist the team mainly by the enthusiasm shown by the local youngsters. In 1964 they won promotion to the first Division of the Yorks Central League this was possibly the most exciting team ever, to represent East Ardsley United.

## TREMENDOUS STRUGGLE

1958 was a year in which the decline of the club took place and for the next three years it was "touch and go" each succeeding season. At a meeting on 25th October 1961 Sidney Broadhead moved that a six man committee be formed to enquire into ways and means of ensuring the clubs future. It was decided that seven members, be elected - the following were asked to form the committee J.H. Bramley (President) G. Wintersgill, C. Thraves, E. Woollin, G.J. Whittington, L. Saville and T. Booth. This committee with tremendous help from tradesmen members of the team and enthusiastic labourers of all description decided to build new accommodation to make the club attractive. The new club room and dressing accommodation is a fine testimony to voluntary labour and real enthusiasm for the club and at that time in 1962 the young and energetic secretary and treasurer John Dews and Horace Eddings. One must not forget the 12 years spent in the Leeds League nor their participation in the Hepworth Cup Final in 1948. It seemed fitting that Lofthouse should at last gain a victory for over the years they had been beaten in several finals by Ardsley. It was also ironic that the man who mainly engineered their defeat was their former Captain Fred Wintersgill. The East Ardsley team on that occasion was Baldwin Holmes, Jarrett, H. Saville, Armitage, Thornton, Booth, Clayton, Baldwin, L. Saville, Walker and Leadbeater a fine side - a credit to the village itself.

The club at present time is in first rate condition with many enthusiastic players under the leadership of Richard Bromley, with one or two older hands like Robert Pearson to guide the cricket and men like J. Hodgson and his team of helpers to keep the flag flying to mark the centenary in 1978.

EAST ARDSLEY UNITED C. C. 1908-9.



East Ardsley United C.C., 1911.



H. WIGGLESWORTH (Scorer). O. WATSON. Dr. EWING (President). A. HEPWORTH. R. A. WHITELEY (Hon. Sec.)  
W. SCARGILL. A. MITCHELL. S. RUSSELL. M. BEDFORD (Captain). J. H. PEARSON. W. BEDFORD.  
W. HAIGH. J. ILLINGWORTH.

FAST ARDSLEY UNITED C.C. 1ST XI 1964 2ND DIVISION WINNERS



STANDING LEFT TO RIGHT - R. ROBINSON, J. DEWS, P. LEATHLEY, B. MITCHELL, J. HEALD, B. LAMMING  
SEATED LEFT TO RIGHT - R. PEARSON, G. FARRAR, B. WALLIS (CAPT) C. ROBINSON, B. SENIOR.